

place was an empty silk pillow, partly made. Iola said:

"Some one opened the windows where I had been working last night, a strong wind came up and you see the result. The rose leaves were sent me by a friend from California. I have managed to gather them up, for they were blown off the table in a heap, but the down—I fear it is not worth the labor gathering it up."

"You might try," suggested the young man. "If you would get me a pillow-slip or a deep basket I will see what can be done."

Miss Duncombe went to the house and brought out three baskets. She and Flo set about the same task as this "hired help." She learned that his name was Archie Blair. His manner was so courteous and respectful that they became quite friendly. Little Flo took a rare liking to the bright-hearted young man, who said and did all kinds of merry things in chasing down the butterfly-like down, making of work real play.

It took two hours to gather up most of the scattered down. Then Iola said:

"I am greatly obliged, and the compensation—"

"I was just going to speak of that," declared Archie. "If you will allow me to sketch some of the beautiful surroundings here, with this little fairy and yourself in the picture, I will feel fully compensated."

So he was an artist, reflected Iola, and several little sketches of his pencil convinced her that he had no ordinary talent. She felt warranted in asking him to lunch, and when he went on his way little Flo made him promise to come and see them when he returned from his sketching tour of the lake district, some twenty miles distant.

If the young artist ceased to remember the fair maiden with whom he had spent those delightful hours, not so Iola. A new-comer in town, a Robert Wilder, came pretty regularly to see her, but Iola took little interest

in him. He had bloomed forth in the village as a young man of fortune on a vacation. Mr. Duncombe had met him at the town club and took quite a fancy to him. This was, however, because as his partner at whist the talented young man won most of the games from their adversaries at cards.

One evening this delectable individual met Jim Carr, a servant at the Duncombe home, in a secret way. Judging from their conversation, these two had known one another in a sinister way in the past. Further than that, it appeared that the vaunted young man of wealth had some hold on Jim.

"See here, Carr," he said on the present occasion, "you know what I'm after; a rich wife. If old Duncombe has the money I think I wouldn't object to becoming his son-in-law."

"You want to be spry, then," advised Jim.

"Why is that?"

"There's a young artist fellow who has been around for an evening or two. He met Miss Iola about a week ago, it seems, and, on his way to the city, has decided to stop in the village for a week or two. My opinion is he is in love with the girl."

"Oh, well, I'm pretty solid with the old man," boasted Wilder. "See here, I want you to do something for me and I'll pay you well."

"All right—what is it?"

"I want you to act as my dictaphone. In other words, could you manage to overhear what conversation goes on in the house; like what old Duncombe says about me, and how the girl regards me?"

"Sure," replied Jim readily.

"Then report to me day after tomorrow," and at their tryst Jim appeared at the time appointed.

"I've got some news," he advised Wilder.

"Let's have it."

"There's a closet I managed to hide in just off the library, where I over-